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An anti-colonial approach to print and design

volume 54:number 2
2022 summer

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ROM REIMAGINES THE MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

After a devastating two-year pandemic, Ontario needs ROM more than ever: to remind us of the power of art, culture, and nature; to reconnect our communities after prolonged isolation; to better understand lives and worlds beyond our own.

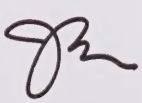
But while our mission has never been more vital, there are still audiences we are not regularly reaching to the degree we want. As we know from community dialogues, many young adults and many new Canadians—the very future of this diverse province—do not consider museums central to their lives. As culture sector leaders, it is on us to change this perception, to ensure Ontario's next generation gets to know ROM and feel its relevance to them as strongly as previous generations. That requires reimagining the museum experience, starting with the way we understand the art objects, artifacts, and specimens in our collection.

ROM Immortal, our dynamic new brand voice, does just that. Launching June 9, 2022, ROM Immortal frames objects as portals to powerful stories. In a series of short essays in this issue, our curators show you how.

A creation diamond unveils a poem about the origins of the cosmos. A piece of bleached coral reminds us of Earth's fragility. An 18th-century Chinese vase anticipates cross-cultural contemporary art. An ornately patterned bowl holds the memories of a place fractured by heartbreak and war. Through the unique lens of ROM Immortal, our collection reveals potent stories and addresses pressing issues, reminding us of the power of art, culture, and nature to help us understand the past, make sense of the present, and shape a shared future.

Yet another reminder of this power is *Kore 670*, a stunning sculpture of a young maiden from the Acropolis in Athens, now on display on our main floor. In ancient Greece, this statue was a gift to Athena, the goddess of wisdom and war. Today, we can share that gift with Ontario. In celebration of *Kore 670*, our main floor galleries and programs will be free to all visitors from June 9 to September 25, for the duration of her visit to ROM.

This free main floor program is a way to throw open our doors and welcome Ontarians back to culture this summer. To reimagine our museum more fully as a community anchor and a civic space. A museum with ancient specimens and contemporary sensibilities, with exclusive displays and inclusive access. A museum of the future—for everyone.



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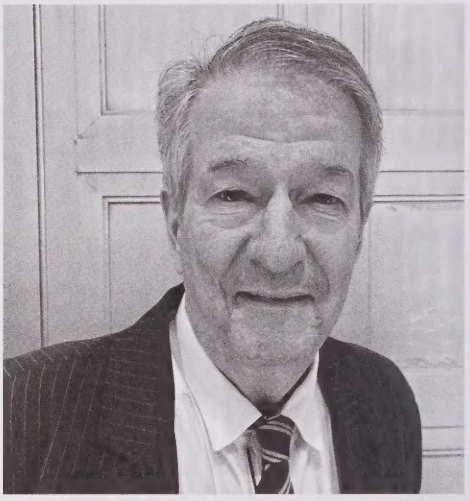

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PART 1

EXCLUSIVE MEMBER PREVIEW

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Kent Monkman: Being Legendary
Friday, October 7, 2022, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Curated by Cree artist Kent Monkman, *Being Legendary* presents an installation of new, original paintings by the artist alongside objects from ROM's collections.

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Kent Monkman
Aurora Ominika-Enosse, 2020
Acrylic on canvas
152.4 × 101.6 c

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For more information, visit rom.on.ca/members/events.

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Call the Gardiner Museum for more details at 416.586.8080.

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FOSSIL FIND

Researchers discover 328-million-year-old octopus ancestor

USING A ROM FOSSIL, researchers at the American Museum of Natural History discovered a 10-armed cephalopod that lived roughly 328 million years ago. Named *Syllipsimopodi bideni* after President Joe Biden, it is the earliest known ancestor of the octopus and vampire squid.

Dr. Christopher Whalen, the lead author on the paper describing the specimen in *Nature Communications*, stressed the importance of the fossil's 10 arms. "All previously reported fossil vampyropods preserving the appendages only have eight arms," he said in a news release. "So this fossil is arguably the first confirmation of the idea that all cephalopods ancestrally possessed ten arms."

After the fossil was donated to ROM in 1988, "it sat in a drawer for decades," the *New York Times* reported, one of millions of objects in the Museum's collection. While looking for another fossil, Whalen found it and was struck by how well-preserved it was.

The rest is (natural) history.

An exceptionally well-preserved vampyropod fossil from ROM collections and on which Whalen's study is based. The fossil was originally discovered in what is now Montana and donated to ROM in 1988.

THE PSYCHEDELIC COCKTAIL

Why ancient Peruvian leaders served hallucinogen-laced beer to their subjects

By **Colin J. Fleming**

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VILCA. First, it's both the name of a psychedelic powder and the tree from which the powder is made. Tall and thorny, the vilca tree (*Anadenanthera colubrina*) grows throughout South America, including Peru. Within its seeds is a powerful psychoactive ingredient: butofenin. And when those seeds are pulverized and powdered, they can be snorted or smoked, delivering what Dr. Justin Jennings, ROM Senior Curator of Latin American Archaeology, describes as a trip like ayahuasca—a mystical, ego-obliterating high.

Second, vilca has a long history in South America, especially Peru, where Jennings and other ROM researchers have been working for almost two decades. In fact, the earliest evidence of vilca goes back 4,000 years to a site in northern Argentina, where researchers found a pipe and vilca seeds.

During what's known as the Formative Period (900–300 BCE), archaeologists like Jennings believe that vilca was probably restricted to religious leaders, who used the psychedelic to enable spiritual journeys. But in the Middle Horizon (600–1000 CE), as the Wari—a pre-Incan Andean civilization—expanded their empire, the use of vilca began to shift. In a paper published on January 11, 2021 in *Antiquity*, Jennings and his three colleagues—Matthew Biwer, Willy Yépez Álvarez, and Stefanie Bautista—claim to have found "the first archaeobotanical evidence" of the addition of vilca to beer, facilitating what they believe to have been a collective psychedelic experience.

The evidence was excavated at Quilcapampa, a Wari colonial settlement on the coastal plain of Southern Peru. Among the millions of plant remains classified, Biwer found 16 vilca seeds and an abundance of molle, which is used to make beer.

The proximity of the plants, as well as pottery found nearby, suggest Wari leaders hosted intimate feasts during which they served vilca-laced beer to their subjects. Yet this discovery only begs a more interesting question: Why? Without any written records, it's impossible to know for sure, but Jennings and his team have a theory.

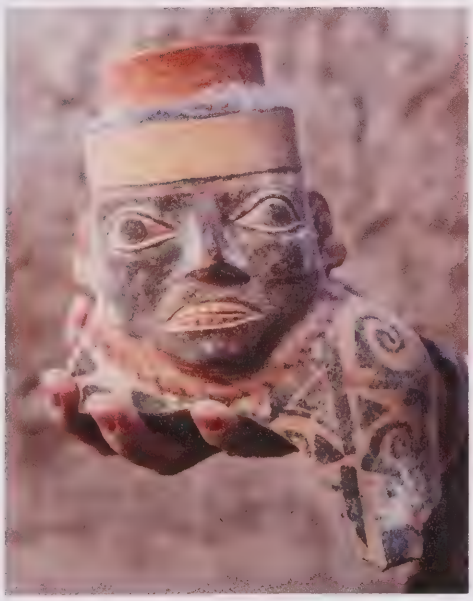
Feasting of all kinds—including the much larger, beer-soaked feasts of the later Incan empire—can facilitate a deeper relationship between leaders and their subjects, but vilca as typically consumed is too powerful a hallucinogen to experience a sense of togetherness. Combining it with beer mellowed and extended the trip, Jennings says, creating a collective psychedelic journey that might have occasioned a unique kind of intimacy.

"What they're trying to do is expand the notion of family," explains Jennings. "Beyond one's uncle, one's nephew, to create clans that become the loci for political action."

Plus, he suspects it could also have been a display of power. "Vilca is very hard to come by. It's growing on the opposite side of the Andes. You have to have access to longer chains of exchange in order to get it."

That special access—and the know-how to make it—may have raised the status of Wari leaders in their subjects' eyes, helping to establish a new hierarchy in the nascent settlement.

Jennings says the feasts also emphasized the contributions of ordinary citizens, including copious amounts of meat and beer. "Even though the Wari host might add the secret sauce, everyone was contributing," he says. "You sense they are trying to create community."



Close-up of a face-necked jar. More than 800 years before the Inca, the Wari State expanded out of the central Peruvian Sierra around 600 CE and shaped interactions in the region for the next 400 years. Wari ceramics like this Robles Moqo face-necked jar excavated at Quilcapampa can be found across much of Peru.

THE DAWN OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

Sediment core from Crawford Lake shows evidence of how humans have substantially altered the Earth over a short period of time

By **Kat Eschner**

THE DAY OF THE LAST CORING of Crawford Lake was bitterly cold. A small crowd stood on the ice, which was almost half a metre thick. They braced against the chill as Monica Garvie, an Anishinaabe PhD candidate from northern Ontario, knelt beside a chainsaw-cut hole. She performed a ceremony and laid cedar branches on the site.

"To care for the lake during an extractive process is just showing our respect and ensuring we're maintaining a good relationship with the lake," Garvie says. "For me, it was very meaningful to be able to be there and do ceremony."

Then, the research team got to work, pouring a mixture of dry ice and ethanol into a big metal tube that they braced from a tripod before sending the device down into the frigid water. It headed down deep into the part of the lake where the water never mixes, allowing undisturbed layers of sediment to accumulate on the lakebed. The tube cored the sediment, fixing a cylinder of the alternating white and dark layers of each year and the story they have to tell.

Crawford Lake is deeper than it is wide, which means the lowest levels of water don't mix much with the upper layers. Decay is slow, and no large life disturbs the lake bottom. As a result, it and other such non-mixing lakes, technically known as "meromictic," have a good record in the sediment of what's happened since they formed, says professor John Smol of Queen's University, an expert on analyzing lake histories.

Though it isn't the only meromictic lake in Ontario, Crawford Lake is "of considerable interest," he says. Its unusually detailed sediment layers—known as "varves"—show a high-resolution picture of happenings on its shores over the last 10,000 years. The record closest to the surface shows up as a light and a dark layer of sediment for almost every single year. By counting these rings, much like the rings of a tree, researchers can accurately date their findings back as far as the late 12th century. The results tell a lot about what was happening in and near the lake.

In work stretching back more than 50 years, ROM scientists have found centuries of evidence left by humans living and working around the lake. This work helped lay the ground for the lake and its shores to become an important site of learning and remembrance about the different peoples who have lived on the land, which is the traditional territory of the Wendat people. Now, these final cores will be used in determining whether Crawford Lake, with its long evidence of human activity, could be designated the "Golden Spike" that marks the beginning of a new epoch in the world's history—one defined by humans.

The name of this possible new epoch has already entered cultural consciousness: the Anthropocene. But whether or not it will be formally declared by the body that divides and names geological time, the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS), is another matter. From the perspective of "deep time," as geologic time is sometimes called, the past 2,000 years are an eyeblink, says Soren Brothers, ROM's inaugural Allan and Helaine Shiff Curator of Climate Change. An epoch typically lasts for several million years and an Anthropogenic distinction today would imply

Photo by Jonathan Rosen.

that our human influence on the planet's sedimentary record is irreversible.

In the past, that meant changes to the rock. But "there hasn't been enough time for cliffs of rock to form over the short period humans have substantially altered the Earth system," Brock University micropalaeontologist Francine McCarthy writes in an upcoming book chapter. "Possible candidates [Golden Spike sites] that will literally define what it means to be Anthropocene include cave deposits, peat bogs, and coral reefs as well as lake and marine sediments."

The decision will be made later this year by a body within the ICS, the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy. They will look at the sedimentary record at a number of candidate sites and if they declare a new epoch, choose one site's record to define the new epoch's beginning. Crawford Lake is among the sites being considered, because its sediments tell a clear story of human influence for so many hundreds of years.

The cores don't look like much as they come up from the bottom of the lake, one after another over the course of a day until there are three. The researchers use hot water to separate them from the metal tubes and yellow plastic scrapers to clean up their outsides before hauling them to shore on wooden planks.

"I've worked with a lot of sediment cores," Brothers says. "Usually, you take a metre-long plug of mud from the bottom of the lake, and it looks like a metre-long plug of mud." The clear varves of the Crawford Lake core are a different beast. "I've heard about these kinds of cores existing theoretically," he says, "but they're so rare." The long human history

clearly told by the core just makes it more appealing, he says—regardless of a possible Golden Spike designation. "It would not fundamentally change the story that this core tells," he says.

Researchers have relied on the evidence offered by core after core to make their findings so far. But this was the last time the lake will be cored, says McCarthy, who has been leading efforts related to the lake for the past half-decade and is presently a ROM research associate.

After talking with Catherine Tammaro, a Wyandot Elder and artist who became involved during consultations about the project, McCarthy says, "it became clear that our scientific aspirations to getting more sediment cores and the values of the Indigenous people about the lake as a spiritual site were different."

For Tammaro, it comes down to the Indigenous value of "right relations" with the earth. "I believe that the best way to express that would be: to not violate the earth or the natural world, to be in a relationship with the natural world responsibly, furthering sustainable lifeways," they say.

The nature of human activity's influence on the sediment record changes in the 20th century: here, evidence of the dawn of the Nuclear Age and the Great Acceleration has also left its indelible mark. Particulate evidence of increased fossil fuel use began to fill up the sediment record. Microplastics made their appearance. Crawford Lake's cores tell this whole story.

McCarthy sought a balance. She entered into an agreement with Conservation Halton, which owns Crawford Lake, to ensure that this coring would be the final one. "We committed to it being the last time that the sediments of the deep basin would be cored," she says.

When the local conservation authority bought Crawford Lake and its surroundings from the Crawford family in 1969, nobody knew how special the lake was. At the time, says Hassaan Basit, the current CEO of Conservation Halton, his institution was keen to prevent the 463-hectare parcel of land from being turned into quarries and foster connection with its adjacent Rattlesnake Point site.

But that changed quickly after ROM curator Jock McAndrews asked to sample the lake. In the first core, his team found corn pollen in the varves as far back as the late 1200s, well before colonization. They knew right away it was evidence of Indigenous presence near the lake.

Further research established a narrative: by 1972, the researchers were confident that a village of Iroquoian people had lived on the shores of the lake, staying for decades at a time between the late 1200s and the late 1500s and cultivating maize as part of their food.

"The pollen grains are probably the tiniest things that we have in the Museum," says Deborah Metsger, Assistant Curator of Botany at ROM. But they had a big impact on the conservation area, says Basit: by the early 1980s, work had begun on reconstruction of three longhouses on the site of their original foundations. They still stand today, populated with both artifacts and an exhibition about contemporary Indigenous art and culture. In total, evidence of 11 longhouses was found on the shores of the lake.

Metsger has also been involved with the site for a long time. In 1981, she was one of the field assistants when ROM took a core to be used as an artist reference for the model core displayed in the Museum's evolution gallery. Back then, she says, "we cored the ice ourselves with hand augers."

The human story that McAndrews and other researchers have found starts with the Iroquoian village, but it doesn't end there. A few hundred years later, in the 1800s, a drop in tree pollen and the near-simultaneous introduction of ragweed pollen tells them the land around the lake was cleared, two things characteristic of European settlement.

Then, in the late 1800s, the Crawford family bought the lake and its surroundings and began logging in earnest, setting up a sawmill on the edge of the lake to process the vast white pines in the area. All this human activity—dating back to the Iroquoian village—changed the properties of the lake and caused algae to bloom in vast mats.

But the nature of human activity's influence on the sediment record changed in the 20th century: here, evidence of the dawn of the Nuclear Age and the Great Acceleration has also left its indelible mark. Radioactive cesium was deposited at much higher levels in the 1950s, reaching a peak in 1963 and dropping off with the signing of nuclear proliferation treaties later in the midcentury. Particulate evidence of increased fossil fuel use began to fill up the sediment record. Microplastics made their appearance.

Crawford Lake's cores tell this whole story. One of the final three is already in a cryogenic facility at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa. Another is being held at Carleton University to be used for research. The last is now at ROM, where it marks the first acquisition by Brothers.

The February 2022 excursion marked an end, of sorts, for a process of evidence-gathering at this unusual lake. Though research on Crawford Lake's deep secrets is far from over, it's time for the lake itself to rest. As a scientist, McCarthy says, "it's a little bit daunting to know that I can't go back and take more cores if I want to."

Garvie, the PhD candidate who performed the ceremony at the lake, often finds herself in the midst of the balancing act that McCarthy is trying to perform. In her experience, Indigenous ways of knowing the world and Western scientific methods are "often incommensurable." But as an Indigenous woman as well as someone who is studying at Queen's University, the geologic history of lakes, she's trying to engage with both. "For me," she says, "the fact that Team Crawford allowed this space for the ceremony was a good sign and a move in a positive direction which normalizes different ways of being."

Opposite: A close-up view of one of the cores from Crawford Lake.

BREAKING BOUNDARIES, WITH NEW LEATHER FASHIONS

An interview with Sudheer Rajbhar of Chamar Studio, Mumbai, India

Interviewed by **Sarah Fee**

ARTIST AND FASHION DESIGNER SUDHEER RAJBHAR of Mumbai is pushing the boundaries of his medium and materials by subverting caste stereotypes in India while developing luxury goods that eschew leather by using recycled material. "Chamar," a caste-based slur, has historically been applied to craftsmen working in the tanning and leather industries. Rajbhar's brand Chamar takes on the term to disrupt and disestablish the social hierarchy. He has partnered with Dalit and Muslim leather workers in Dharavi (a large disadvantaged neighbourhood in Mumbai), shattering historical conventions that have tied these artisans to denigration and poverty. India's beef ban (prohibiting people in most of its 28 states from working with leather) compounds the precarity faced by those employed in the leather goods industry. By replacing leather with recycled tire innertubes, creating high-end handbags and shoes, and embracing the name Chamar for a luxury brand, the design group seeks to claim this inimitable Indian craft for its actual makers. Here, Rajbhar lays out the vision and goals for the Chamar brand.

Rajbhar, in partnership with Sajdeep Soomal, PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, is the recipient of ROM's 2021–22 IARTS Textiles of India Grant.

Your project is as much social change as design and medium change. You are actively embracing the term Chamar? Leather artisans, they have a stamp on their head: Chamar. It means leather and people working with dead animals from generation to generation, Muslim and Dalit people. They are lower caste people, and India is still conservative in these matters. I started this as a public art project. I printed small bags, with "Chamar" written in all the languages of India and the world. I wore a bag on my shoulder and went from village to village, and people asked me, "why are you doing this?" And I told them about our project. And the artisans, they felt proud, saying, "we're going to be like a brand and people will recognize our craftsmanship. We can be the same as Gucci." So, yes, there can be social change.

How did you start working with traditional leather workers in Dharavi? And your work to find a new medium? I curated an exhibition called *We are here because you are there* (Clark House, 2018). Through this show, I wanted to question the authenticity in the artist-artisan relationships: when the artists make work, they rely on assistants, but there is no credit for the assistants. And then I started working with leather artisans in Dharavi. In 2015 came the beef ban, and they could no longer have access to leather, and so there was no employment. So I entered into conversation with them, to find a way to change the medium.

In 2018, I found a replacement for leather —something sustainable, without harmful chemicals. We sourced tire innertubes from Dharavi, which is a huge recycling hub, and converted them into powder, and mixed the powder with pigment and natural rubber to create sheets. We have been working with the French textile designer Camille Bastien to weave strips of the rubber material into bags. Next, we will make shoes.

By changing the medium to rubber, we can change people's thinking. They can see it's sustainable and it's vegan. The leather itself was a problem for consumers, for younger

generations, who are ready to wear Chamar brand if it's made of rubber, not leather.

Tell us more about this idea of Chamar as a luxury brand. You say the word Chamar in the West and people connect it with Chanel, which is luxury. We use the word as a resistance to discrimination. The caste system in India divides labour, where artisanal work—blacksmithing, leather work, tailoring, haircutting, etc.—are all seen as polluting, untouchable professions. These essential services are discriminated against for their meniality.

Why can't Indian craftsmanship be like Chanel? So I decided, okay, let's use this name Chamar as an identity, as a brand, to make visible those who have never had recognition, who were never recognized by anyone, zero. There is a movement in western Uttar Pradesh that is drawn from self-respect, where Chamars from the Jatav community use Chamar as a term of pride on cars, homes, and social media. Our Indian craftsmanship should be known worldwide as a luxury brand.

How will the IARTS grant help the group and this vision? We are a small studio, and we don't have enough funding to buy the things we need: pigments or small pieces of equipment and material to do our [rubber] experiments. And in terms of sharing our knowledge, this is really a good platform to reach a wider audience. Sajdeep Soomal and I will interview the artisans and put their voices on the Chamar Foundation website.

We plan to have design incubators to educate and promote creative practices where design, conceptual thought, and branding add to value creation. Artisans should innovate and understand their authorship and the value of their creativity.

The grant will help our reach at the grassroots level. I learned from the older artisans in Dharavi that many worked in the past for Gucci and other international brands, which came as a shock to me. Then, they [the artisans] started copying their designs, because they have no training or understanding of contemporary design. Learning about design and branding can be really useful for [the artisans], to grow their business, to break the chain so they can experiment and master design, and not simply copy. That is a healthy future.

I love that expression, "healthy future." Gandhi brought an association of value, cleanliness, and sustainability to khadi [Indian handwoven cotton cloth]. The design incubators can help former leather artisans appreciate the value of careful work, making well-finished, perfect things. Most have always worked in very dirty conditions; but the idea and practice of clean hands and high quality can happen in the incubator. We also want them to be away from toxic chemicals [used in leather tanning] and exploitative production

methods, and be remunerated adequately for the work so that they are not forced to work in unhealthy or oppressive conditions. Self-respect that annihilates the question of caste oppression in their work can change lives and bring dignity and confidence.

Speaking of futures, what are your future dreams or vision for Chamar? Here in India, you can see [leather workers] sitting on the street, on the pavement, on the roadside, repairing shoes. They have no workspace or shops, nowhere to receive customers. So we are opening a small space in Colaba [an upscale shopping and tourist district in Mumbai], in Clark House, where we can sell products. My dream is a showroom. But that needs funding, a huge investment. It's not for now, but in the future definitely—a co-operative, small-scale business with constituents as stakeholders. In Rajasthan, we are restoring a haveli [a historic house], which in the past only the upper caste could own and live in. Chamar people, they made the havelis, the beautiful frescoes, but they could not live in the houses. And they got no recognition. So we are calling it "Haveli Chamar." We made Chamar Studio [in Mumbai] an open playground, where artisans, designers, anyone can come collaborate and make their work. Haveli Chamar will also welcome artists and designers from everywhere to work with the artisans of Rajasthan, because Rajasthan has a very, very rich craft tradition, in textiles and leather. Chamar uses luxury, a market that is both pretentious and rare, as a path to erase [employment] precariousness and decolonize artisanship from the realm of luxury consumption as seen, and controlled, by mainland western Europe.

Sarah Fee is Senior Curator, Global Fashion & Textiles at ROM.

As part of the programming of the IARTS Textiles of India Grant, Sudheer Rajbhar is invited to Toronto to present the results of the Chamar team in 2023.

HANDS UP

Zak Ové's art addresses notions of belonging and Blackness, reflected in a new contemporary art acquisition

By **Silvia Forni**

A LONDON-BASED, MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST working in film, sculpture, and photography, Zak Ové reclaims African and Caribbean mythologies through eclectic and unconventional materials and technologies. Much of Ové's multimedia work blends notions of Africanness and Blackness in ways that are both thought-provoking and visually striking. In *Hands Up* (2019), a recent ROM acquisition, he uses found and purposefully sourced materials to create a composition that comments on contemporary events and makes reference to traditional African masks and figures—what he describes as "new world materials for old world concepts." It is a sculpture made almost entirely from Lambretta parts, with an African mask recast in graphite.

Ové's reinterpretation of carving traditions from Africa—where ebony wood is typically the material used—is both a physical and metaphorical recasting of African sculpture, using both materials around him and new technology.

His fascination with the interplay between antiquity and the future is inspired by masking rituals and traditions of Trinidadian carnival, which is itself rooted in a struggle for emancipation. Ové's work celebrates the power of play, the juxtaposition of parody and sacred ritual, and the blurring of edges between reality and fantasy, flesh and spirit. His use of a broad range of materials—copper, wood, Victoriana, and other found objects or components—situates his art in multiple conceptual and geographical spaces where it merges and mutates into endless possibilities and unexpected identities.

Internationally acclaimed for challenging boundaries and investigating the complex entanglements of class, race, and religion, Ové's art explores themes of lost culture and African identity within the context of his Trinidadian-British cultural background. Ové uses new technology and materials to pay tribute to both spiritual and artistic African concepts. Over the years, and through various media, he has been exploring how African and diasporic aesthetics, ideas, and sensitivities intersect and shape ritual and daily practices that connect African descendants globally.

In *Hands Up*, Ové evokes a sense of nostalgia. Lambretta scooters were all the rage in Trinidad in the 1960s when the island received its independence and there was a euphoric sense of emancipation. The artwork's high energy captures that sense of freedom, yet, as with much of Ové's practice, there is a nuanced socio-political statement—the title betrays its duplicity.

Whilst empowering and uplifting, *Hands Up* also has a clear political undertone and hints at the violence against Black people in European and American culture, echoing the Black Lives Matter movement. It is a work that encapsulates many stories and is a beautiful and poetic intersection of ideas of spirituality, tradition, identity, and globalization.

Silvia Forni is Senior Curator, Art & Culture: Global Africa.

Zak Ové
Hands Up, 2019
1960s Lambretta scooter, cast graphite, handmade glass African beads, LED lighting, and electrical transformer
140 × 60 × 70 cm

SOCIAL MEDIA FROM EDO JAPAN

How catfish prints in 1855 were a combination of news, satire, and social commentary

By **Akiko Takesue**

WHEN PEOPLE ENCOUNTER SEVERE NATURAL disasters, they feel an instinctive desire to learn about the degree of damage, they worry about a loved one's safety, and they express a range of emotions toward the incidents and the subsequent consequences. Today, social media functions as a prevalent tool for such expressions, and the posts reflect people's complex reactions. While some are sombre, thoughtful, or simply examples of reportage, others capture public sentiment and feelings through humorous and satirical memes.

More than 160 years ago in Edo (today's Tokyo), it was namazu-e or "catfish prints" that played a similar role in information dissemination when a large earthquake shook the city in 1855. These single-page prints, with accompanying texts and illustrations, were quickly yet extensively produced immediately after the disaster and sold for a few cents each. They became the medium for Edo's townspeople to get information about the earthquake, and it is said that over 250 different catfish prints were created during the two months following the earthquake. But what was it about catfish that made them so central to the conversation in these prints?

In Japan, an archipelago repeatedly struck by large-scale earthquakes, folklore tells of giant catfish living underground, and these fish have been associated with earthquakes since the 16th century. As the story goes, catfish were normally controlled by the deity at the Kashima Shrine located northeast of Edo. The fish were held down with the kaname-ishi stone, but in 1855, they took advantage of the absence of the Kashima deity, shook off the stone, and moved around, causing an enormous earthquake. The catfish prints reported the devastating consequences of the earthquake and the subsequent fires in the city. These prints also provided the suffering population with an explanation for why the earthquake happened, by depicting catfish

Untitled
(Edo Catfish and Shinshu Catfish)
1855
Woodblock print
Unknown maker
Japan

Opposite:
Untitled
(Kashima Deity pressing down giant catfish with Kaname-ishi)
1855
Woodblock print
Unknown maker
Japan

(a synonym of the earthquake) as monsters or half-humans being punished and chastised for misbehaving. For the angry, sorrowful citizens, these prints were a catharsis.

Humour stands out as one of the characteristics in the prints, with their cartoon-like depictions of catfish. The prints were filled with layers of parodies, puns, and satires, similar to the memes seen in social media today. One print depicted the catfish and the stone as sumo wrestlers, showing sumo wrestlers' names written with puns related to the earthquake's outcomes. Another illustrated a catfish being grilled, capturing a sense of revenge by the people affected by the earthquake, but also acting as a parody of grilled eel, which was a popular food at that time.

Interestingly, the role of catfish in these prints gradually shifted from evil to good and even divine as time passed. This was because the earthquake also brought benefits, though transient, to the Edo townspeople through the government's emergency relief, voluntary donations from the wealthy samurai and merchants, and the subsequent reconstruction boom from which artisans earned extra income. For the people, this appeared to be a sort of social mending to reduce the widening gap between the wealthy and the poor that existed prior to the earthquake. It made them believe that a divine power meant for the earthquake to happen.

In premodern Japan, the natural phenomena were understood within the continuation of nature, humans, and societies. When the circulation of ki (vital spirit or energy) stagnated in the human body, a person would get sick;

similarly, an imbalance of wealth in society or social problems caused from misgovernance were understood as a stagnation of ki, and the occurrence of severe natural disasters, including earthquakes, tsunamis, and storms, was seen as a cure for such societal illness. The catfish prints therefore also functioned as a social critique by linking previously suppressed social issues to the earthquake.

The fate of the catfish prints was, however, ironic. Unlike typical printed matter, the prints were published by mostly anonymous artists and publishers, outside of the government censorship process. The government eventually banned their production two months after the earthquake. As the memory of disaster began to fade and the reconstruction of the city progressed, the fervor for the catfish prints cooled. And so did the transitory hope for social change. While similar prints were produced after subsequent large earthquakes, they did not earn the same degree of popularity as those produced in 1855. After 1868, when Japan modernized, the medium of woodblock prints itself changed as well.

Until recently, due to their complex connotations of historical, cultural, and visual meanings, the catfish prints did not draw major attention even in Japan. Perhaps more than ever today—in an age of social media and increasing natural disasters around the world—the role these prints played in the aftermath of an earthquake can be meaningfully embraced.

Kashima Osore
(Parody of Kashima Dance)
1855
Woodblock print
Unknown maker
Japan

Akiko Takesue is the Bishop White Committee Associate Curator of Japanese Art & Culture at ROM.

ROM Immortal

Kore 670

Swapnaa Tamhane: Mobile Palace

Fantastic Beasts™: The Wonder of Nature

PART 2

Every art object, artifact, and specimen in ROM is a portal to a powerful story, which helps us understand the past, make sense of the present, and shape our future.

We live on in what we leave behind.

ART CULTURE NATURE CUNEIFORM TABLET

ANOMALOC

IMMORTAL

MOTHER

Brain coral

DEAD OR ALIVE? IT'S UP TO US.

THE OCEANS ARE THE LUNGS OF OUR PLANET, producing most of the oxygen in our atmosphere. And our lungs are under stress. The carbon dioxide and heat that's absorbed by the ocean buffers us from the full effects of climate change, but that comes with a cost. Coral reefs are vibrant ecosystems that provide vast communities of marine life with shelter and food, but when stressed, corals expel their symbiotic algae and turn white. This bleaching often results in the death of corals, devastating local food webs and human communities who subsist off them. By protecting our marine environments while mitigating climate change, we can help make coral reefs resilient to the immediate impacts of global change, preserving them for future generations.

Soren Brothers
Allan and Helaine Shiff Curator of Climate Change

Jingdezhen ware vase

EAST-MEETS-WEST ART. BEFORE SHANG-CHI.

LIKE MARVEL STUDIOS' BLOCKBUSTER *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*, this stunning 18th-century Chinese vase is a striking blend of western and eastern influences. A favourite of Emperor Qinglong (1711–99), the vase is decorated with a deep blue enamel containing four well-detailed landscape cartouches—a distinctly Chinese style. However, its base and neck are ornamented with a deep yellow featuring large and colourful Baroque-style flowers first popularized in Europe. With its "new" group of opaque pigments (white, yellow, pink), the vase is what's called a "famille rose" or "yangcai," which translates to "foreign colours." It is a transcendent work of porcelain—and a harbinger of centuries of cross-cultural exchange, from beautiful vases to Marvel movies.

Chen Shen
Vice President of Art & Culture

Red cremation diamond

TO ESCAPE DEATH, THEY BECAME A DIAMOND.

ALL THE CARBON ATOMS IN OUR BODIES were created in the stars, billions of years ago. Formed and re-formed in new ways, carbon is found everywhere on Earth. In pencils, living creatures, and diamonds—one of nature's most beautiful creations. The word "diamond" comes from the Greek "adamas," meaning "invincible." When cremated, human ashes still contain carbon. If the ashes are placed under high pressure and high temperatures like those found deep within our planet, we can produce a diamond. When ROM Member Ron Fotheringham was dying, he called ROM from the hospital. He didn't want to be buried. He wanted his and his mother's ashes transformed into a red diamond for ROM's collection. Because a diamond is forever. Like the love between a mother and a son.

Kim Tait
Teck Chair of Minerology

Decorative bowl with shawl pattern

THIS BOWL HOLDS THE MEMORY OF AN UNDIVIDED KASHMIR.

SOMETIMES, OBJECTS HOLD MEMORIES not of a person but of a place. This silver bowl was made in the region of Kashmir, located in the northernmost part of the Indian subcontinent. With a long history of skilled artistic production, Kashmir is known for its natural beauty, which in the 20th century attracted honeymooning couples and served as a backdrop for romance scenes in Indian cinema. Today, Kashmir is divided into disputed territories between India, Pakistan, and China. A history of conflict and heartbreak, shifting political boundaries, and hardship has passed from the time the bowl was made. Its finely engraved paisley and coriander-leaf patterns resemble contemporaneous shawl patterns: evidence of a synergistic dialogue between mediums and makers of an earlier era.

Deepali Dewan
Dan Mishra Curator of South Asian Art & Culture

KORE 670

A showpiece sculpture from the Acropolis Museum comes for a brief stay

By **Paul Denis**

© Acropolis Museum, photo: Giorgos Vitsaropoulos.

THE STORY OF *KORE 670* began about 2,500 years ago when the statue was completed around 520–510 BCE, in the Archaic period. From the Greek word for girl or maiden (the plural being "Korai"), a Kore is a brightly painted marble statue of an opulently dressed girl, adorned with jewellery and elaborately arranged hair, including a stephane (crown). Korai were popular in Athens from about 570 to 480 BCE. Their meaning remains elusive; they have been interpreted as goddesses, priestesses, and girls in service of the goddess Athena. Most likely, Korai were very special offerings made to Athena, gifts that delighted the goddess and brought prestige to the family making the dedication. These statues stood on pedestals in the open air on the Acropolis. To date, archaeologists have found some 200 fragments of varying sizes from different Korai, which suggests that the Acropolis, at one point, would have been populated with a forest of Korai in the vicinity of the Archaic Temple of Athena.

As much as *Kore 670* is about celebration and homage, its journey over the centuries tells a more turbulent story—one of near destruction, burial, and discovery. For some 30 to 40 years, this statue stood peacefully on the Acropolis. In 480 BCE, the Persian army attacked Athens, and the assault left the city and the Acropolis in ruins, including the temples, sculptures, and the many Korai. A year later, after defeating the Persians at Salamis and Plataea, the Athenians returned home. Eventually, they began to reconstruct and expand the area of the Acropolis. As a result, much of the damaged architectural remains and sculptures were buried, perhaps as landfill, including 14 Korai.

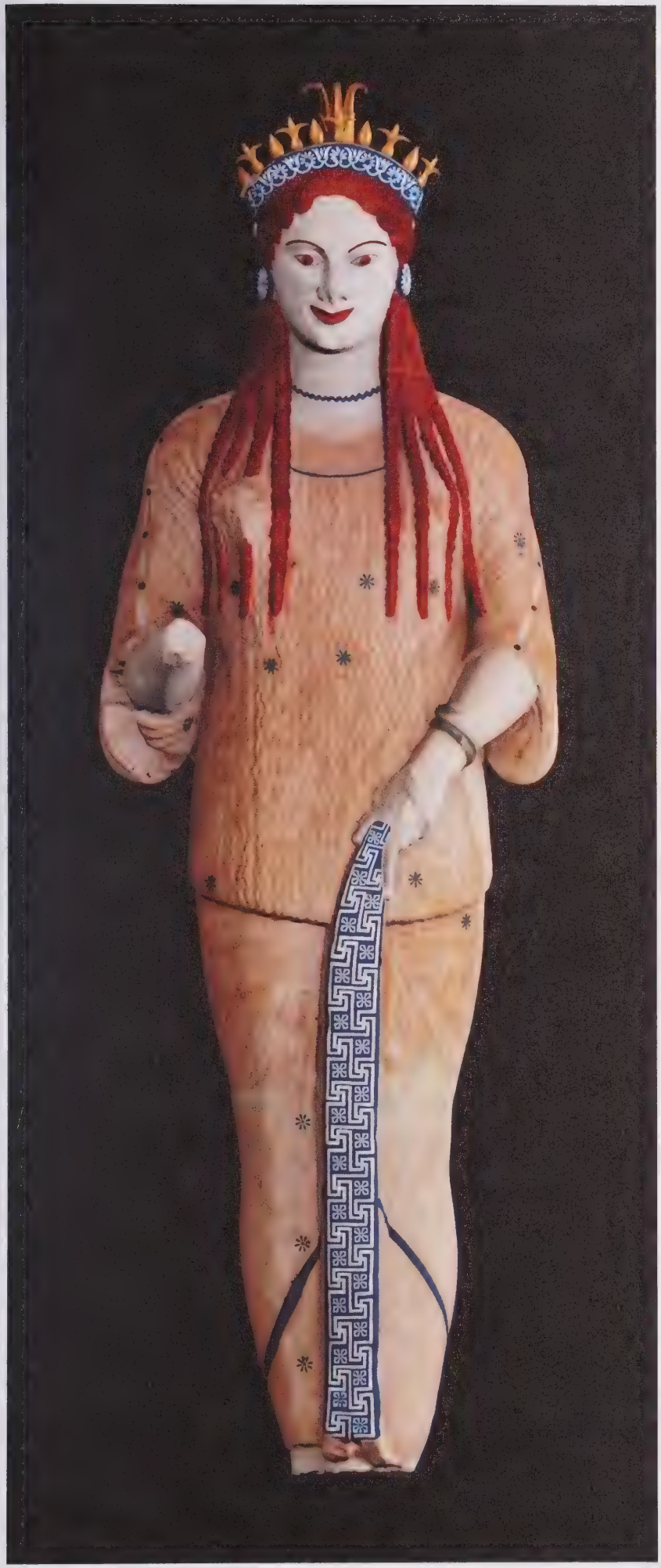
Centuries passed, and with the course of time came numerous wars, sieges, and crusades. The Korai remained undisturbed in the ground. In 1833, the Greeks freed themselves from Turkish occupation. Soon after, work began to clear the Acropolis of the debris and the hodgepodge of recently constructed buildings. As the renovations proceeded, many of the Archaic sculptures buried about 2,300 years earlier began to surface—so much so that in 1874, the first Acropolis Museum, located at the east end of the Acropolis, was opened to conserve, store, and display the wonderful discoveries. The architect of the museum kept the design simple so as not to compete with the existing ancient architecture, the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, and the Propylaea. These early discoveries were opportunistic, surface finds. This changed in 1885, when archaeologists decided to excavate to the bedrock of the Acropolis in a scientific manner by systematically recording and drawing every find and strata. A year later, in January of 1886, they unearthed 14 Korai near the Erechtheion, the same Korai that were buried about 2,300 years earlier by their Athenian ancestors, including the example now on display in ROM until September 25, 2022.

Kore 670 is a masterpiece of Archaic art. She stands frontally and motionless with the left foot advanced. She seems to be preparing to go somewhere since she has raised the thick central fold of her garment to walk more easily. In her raised right hand, she is offering a gift to Athena, probably an apple, pomegranate, or dove.

She is one of two Korai dressed only in a chiton or tunic that reached from shoulders to ground. The chiton was made from very fine linen (or silk) that was pulled over a belt worn around the waist with the overhanging material forming a thick pouch with rich, wavey vertical folds. Below her thighs, the left hand holds a thick gathering of fabric at the centre, which draws the garment tightly around her legs with numerous shallow folds. The long sleeves of the chiton are kept together by buttons; note the folds that ripple from each button.

Greek Archaic sculpture is noted for its fussy yet elegant carving. This is especially evident in the rendering of her hair as it cascades over her back in a mass of carefully carved tresses and the braids falling over her chest. Above her forehead and temples, the hair is brilliantly chiselled into overlapping waves. Her youthful face is set off by a sweet "Archaic smile" with delicately carved lips, bulging almond-shaped eyes surrounded by fine eyelids, and rounded cheeks and pinched chin.

The discovery of the Korai provided more evidence that Greek sculpture was painted. Being



deeply buried, the Korai were protected from the elements, like wind, rain, and sunlight, which erode paint and marble. As a result, many of the Korai were well-preserved, with much of their original paint still adhering to the surface of the marble.

Today, on *Kore 670* (see left), we can see that her hair appears red, but it was really a base colour for the application of a brown paint. Blue rosettes dot the surface of the chiton, and the thick fold between her legs is painted with a rich blue with a white meandering design. The snake bracelet circling her left arm is a dark colour. The disc-shaped earrings are adorned with light-coloured rosettes on a dark background. Her skin would have been waxed and polished, lending it an ivory-coloured sheen. Lastly, she is adorned with a curved stephane (crown), painted blue and decorated with a painted pattern of white palmettes, and a row of drilled holes for gilt bronze lotus buds.

The actual paints used were natural minerals ground into powder, mixed with egg white, and applied to the marble with a brush. For example, malachite was used for green paint and azurite for blue. The Korai were painted bright contrasting colours like red, blue, yellow, and green so that standing against the bright Athenian sky, they would be a remarkable sight.

Next time you walk through ROM's Classical galleries, or through those in any other museum, remember that those gleaming white Greek and Roman marble statues do not appear as they were originally intended to look. They would have been completely painted and in that state would appear very jarring to our contemporary perceptions. As André Malraux aptly noted in *Psychology of Art* (1949), "Athens was never white, but her statues, bereft of colours, have conditioned the sensibilities of Europe ... the whole past has reached us colourless."

Kore 670 remains on display until September 25 and is generously supported by Lead Patron, Hellenic Heritage Foundation

ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

CONSULATE GENERAL OF GREECE IN TORONTO

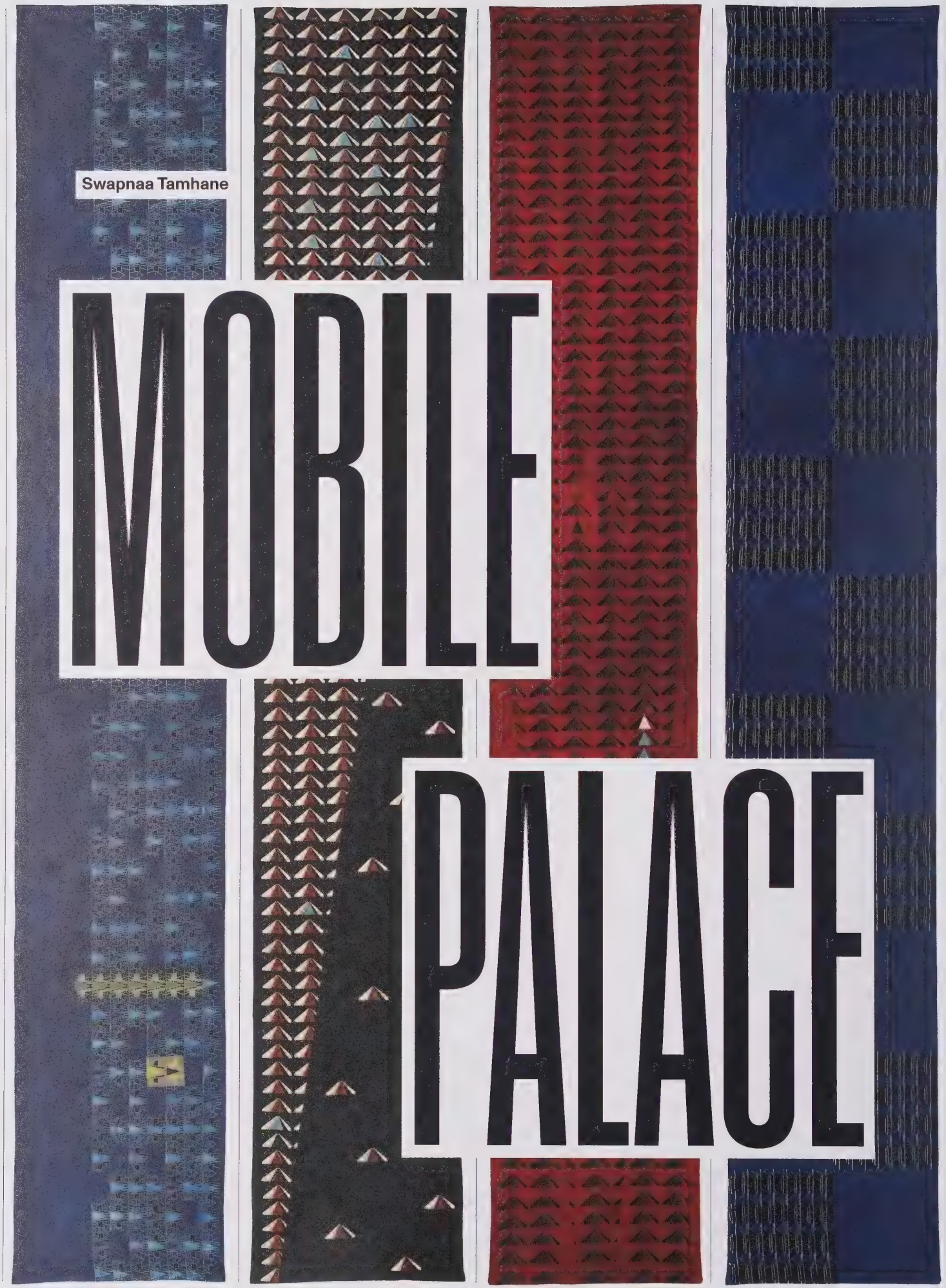
LEAD PATRON

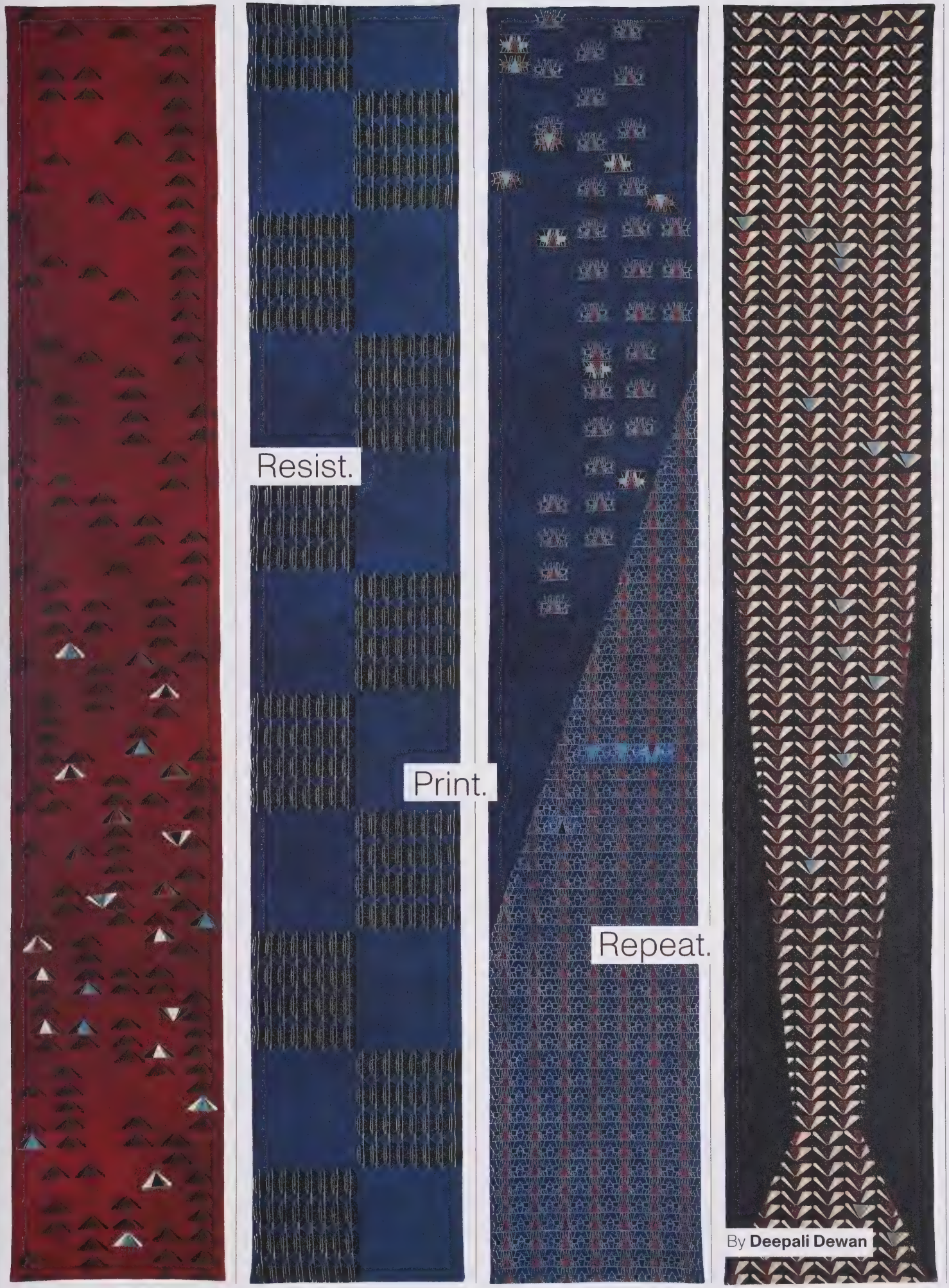
HELLENIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION

On loan from the Acropolis Museum. Issued by the excavations at the Acropolis of Athens conducted by the responsible service of the Greek State in 1886

Swapnaa Tamhane

MOBILE PALACE





By **Deepali Dewan**

A LINE ON PAPER. Then another next to it. Both drawn by hand. They resemble each other, but they are not the same. Each is unique. They don't perfectly line up. The paper underneath is uneven, holding the imperfections of hand-spun cotton cloth (*khadi*) turned into pulp, dried, folded, and crumpled. Textile transformed into paper. Then more lines, resembling the embroidery on *phulkari* textiles. The imperfections are deliberate: an index of the artist's hand and a practice common within embroidery communities to protect against the "evil eye" (*nazar*). Paper transformed into textile. Ink on paper and thread on fabric: both are about making a mark.

This drawing, *Translation*, 2017, is one of the works in the exhibition *Swapnaa Tamhane: Mobile Palace*, which features textile-based installations and works on paper reflecting the artist's larger body of work exploring what it means to make a mark. The works harness different moments in India's history to push back on colonial ideas about the hierarchical separation of art and craft, architecture and textile, permanence and impermanence, rigidity and fluidity. Together, the works create an aspirational space, one that changes our relationship to our environment.

Tent: A Space for the Ceremony of Close Readings, 2018, is a drawing in and on fabric: cotton panels are used to make a tent-like space, and printed patterns cover the outside and inside of the structure. A lantern illuminates the inside, creating patterns on top of patterns. The space is warm, soft, enclosed, feminine, in contrast to the cold, hard, open, masculine modernist architecture that the patterns are based on. It is not ornamentation that supports architecture but architecture that supports the experience of pattern. That is the opportunity for close reading that is being offered: to study and reflect on the hands that were involved in making each element—from the spinning of yarn and weaving of cotton fabric to the carving of the wood blocks, printing of the pattern, and dyeing of the fabric. An audio of the artist's voice reading passages from K.G. Subramanyan's 1986 essay "Do Hands Have a Chance?" advocates for local makers and the centrality of the handmade in India's modern economy.

There is a gathering of many hands in the exhibition. Tamhane conceptualized each piece, came up with the overall design, and applied embroidery and appliqué. She collaborated with artists from the region of Kutch in western India, long known for printed and painted cottons exported around the world. Mukesh Prajapati, his sons Pragnesh and Avdhesh, and nephew Bhavesh Rajnikant carved the wooden printing blocks, discerning how to translate Tamhane's designs into functional three-dimensional form. Salemamad Khatri used the blocks for printing the fabric panels according to Tamhane's arrangements and at his own discretion. The embroidered circular mirrorwork glinting on some of the cotton panels was created by the women from Qasab Kutch

Craftswomen Producer Co. Ltd., and followed Tamhane's colour and placement choices and the women's own technique. Beyond these main contributors, there are other hands: those who picked the cotton, those who worked the machines in the cotton mills, those who made the dyes from vegetable and mineral sources used in the printing, those who assisted with the beading.

All the works in the exhibition draw on India's long history of cotton—as a luxury fabric desired by the world and as a political tool of anti-colonial resistance. Beginning in the 18th century, European imperial powers took control over the trade and manufacture of India's cotton, moving production to industrial textile mills abroad. British colonization created an environment in which people in India were coerced to buy cheaper, lesser-quality, foreign-made cotton products. In early-twentieth-century India, the anti-colonial Swadeshi

movement mobilized around spinning and wearing cottons from India. Indian-owned textile mills paved the way towards self-reliance and self-governance.

Mobile Palace, 2019–2021, is a large, deconstructed tent consisting of eight-metre-long fabric panels of machine-made cotton cloth. Printed patterns cover the surface in different motif, colour, and pattern combinations. Each panel is unique. But rather than appearing like a decorative enclosure where the eye seamlessly glides over the surface, the patterns are interrupted. The interruptions manifest as breaks in the pattern, incomplete motifs, appliqué that introduces a new colour creating combinations impossible through dyeing alone, and beading that aligns with the pattern but glimmers in the light. The choice of machine-made fabric is deliberate: instead of using the political symbol of hand-spun cotton (khadi), Tamhane chose to use cloth from Indian industrial looms, the kind that struck at the heart of the imperial economy by supporting domestic rather than foreign production. The interruptions are visual and conceptual—breaks in the pattern represent breaks in old ways of doing things, making space for something new.

The textile installations in the exhibition draw from a history of design in India. On the one hand, they draw from eighteenth-century tent complexes from the South Asian and Islamic world, which created spaces transformed through fabric, colour, and light. Often referred to as "mobile palaces," they were used by royalty for leisure activities, diplomatic meetings, and military missions and allowed for an ease of movement around the kingdom.

On the other hand, the motifs on the textile installations are drawn from India's modernist architecture and are seen today as symbols of self-governance, progress, and modernity. In the decade after the end of British colonialism, India invested in building for a new nation using the latest principles of modernist design, which emphasized function, simplicity, and rationality through geometric forms, strong horizontal and vertical lines, and reinforced concrete. Tamhane was especially drawn to the Ahmedabad Textile Mill Owners' Association building (ATMA House), designed by Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier and completed in 1954.

In *Mobile Palace*, the printed motifs are adapted from the entry ramp, columns on the facade (*brise-soleil* or "sun breakers"), and niches in the curvilinear walls of the auditorium where a community of textile mill owners would gather. In this way, the motifs move from the outside to the interior of the building. And yet Tamhane pushes back on these architectural histories and their elite, male-centred legacies. The spaces of her textile installations are inclusive, malleable, ephemeral, feminine, nomadic. They are a soft architecture more in tune with the contemporary moment, where the legacy of royal tents can be claimed today by everything from the wedding tent to the roadside tea stall to the tent encampments associated with protest sites around the world.

Achadiya 1, 2020–2021, features the drop cloth that was used to absorb excess materials during the printing of the panels in *Mobile Palace*. Tamhane had it dyed in indigo to reveal the layers of patterning from the many textiles printed on top of it. It is a cloth that was never meant to be seen, where the image emerges from deep within its weave, to which Tamhane has then applied and embroidered mirrors. Each mirror is like a portal or window. The artwork's display on aluminum rods and steel pipes gestures to an industrial loom like the ones used in India's textile mills.

India was a major early centre for the production of indigo, which was desired around the world for its rich hue and naturally colourfast properties. It was also one of the products in the insatiable colonial economy that used enslaved and forced labour, from South Asia to the Caribbean, for its cultivation, leading to anti-imperial revolt. These histories and tensions are carried in and evoked by the blueness of the cloth, pointing to the potential of cloth as resistance.

Let's return to the drawing we started with. Phulkari textiles come from the region of Punjab in the northwestern part of the subcontinent. There is a province of Punjab on the India side and on the Pakistan side, a casualty of Partition in 1947, when independence from colonial rule coincided with the severing of the region into two countries along communal lines, sparking one of the largest forced migrations in human history. Phulkari textiles, made by the hands of mostly Sikh mothers and grandmothers, are an embodiment of female networks and familial bonds that resist the making of political borders. Their threads are stronger than the shifting boundaries of nations. Making a mark is an act of resistance. The impression of a wood block onto a textile surface, the clinging of dye to mordant, thread piercing through fabric, line drawn on paper. All these are marks that disrupt one sense of order and make a claim for a different one. In this way, pattern has never been simply about decoration. It is about how making a mark can shape new ways of seeing, thinking, and being in the world.

Swapnaa Tamhane
Detail from *Translation*, 2017
Water-soluble graphite
on khadi paper
44.5 × 58.5 cm

Key works in the exhibition were created through the support of ROM's IARTS Textiles of India Grant, for which Tamhane was selected as the 2019–20 recipient.

Excerpted from *Swapnaa Tamhane: Mobile Palace*, available for purchase in bookstores and online (Members Price: $9; Retail Price: $10)

Lead Exhibition Patron
Dan Mishra

Canada Council for the Arts | Conseil des arts du Canada

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

This exhibition is generously supported by the Royal Exhibitions Circle.

MAGIC MEETS REAL LIFE

New exhibition at ROM invites visitors to explore the wonder of our natural world through a magical lens

Demiguise
"The Demiguise is found in the Far East, though only with great difficulty, for this beast is able to make itself invisible when threatened and can only be seen by wizards skilled in its capture."
—Newt Scamander™

JOIN US ON A FANTASTICAL JOURNEY where magic and reality collide. Opening summer 2022, the exhibition *Fantastic Beasts™: The Wonder of Nature* showcases a powerful combination of science, nature, and imagination as it takes us on an enchanting trip that explores the links between animals of the natural world, mythical creatures, and their fictional counterparts from the wizarding world.

Following in the footsteps of *Fantastic Beasts*' fictional Magi-zoologist Newt Scamander, guests will encounter the fictional platypus-like mischievous Nifflers, elusive Demiguise, and a host of other magical creatures. The exhibition displays an astounding variety showcasing over 100 exhibits, including the *Dracorex hogwartsia* dinosaur—so named to honor the fictional and famed Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, a hoax mermaid, and what was once believed to be a unicorn horn.

Fantastic Beasts™: The Wonder of Nature displays animals from our world alongside imaginary creatures as we learn how these animals inspired some of the world's most incredible stories and folklore. The exhibition highlights the wonders and precarity of our natural world, encouraging a greater connection to our planet and empowering us all to be advocates for its care.

Developed and produced in London, UK by

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

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Bowtruckle
"The Bowtruckle is a peaceable and intensely shy creature but if the tree in which it lives is threatened, it has been known to leap down upon the woodcutter attempting to harm its home. An offering of woodlice will placate the Bowtruckle long enough to let a witch or wizard remove wand-wood from its tree."
—Newt Scamander

WIZARDING WORLD: © & ™ WBEI. Publishing Rights © JKR. (s22)

Niffler
"The Niffler is a British beast. Fluffy, black and long-snouted, this burrowing creature has a predilection for anything glittery. Nifflers are often kept by goblins to burrow deep into the earth for treasure. Though the Niffler is gentle and even affectionate, it can be destructive to belongings and should never be kept in a house."
—Newt Scamander

Supporting ROM

ROMTravel

Object Highlight

PART 3

CURIOSITY AND WONDER

John Kearsey joined ROM Governors as President and CEO in January 2022.

This spring has been an exciting time as in-person events roar back to life. Being new to the ROM community, these moments have been a terrific way to get to know many of the people who make up its fabric. One of the very first official events I attended in April is lingering with me still. I spent an evening with 115 members of our Young Patrons Circle (YPC), who were buzzing with excitement to return to the place they love.

The energy was palpable. Friends with a kindred passion for curiosity and storytelling explored the Teck Suite of Galleries, the Life in Crisis: Schad Gallery of Biodiversity, and the recently opened Willner Madge Gallery, Dawn of Life. There was laughter, healthy debate, and a sense of connection, faces showing intense inquiry, others smiling ear to ear.

Belonging to a community of people who share their time and talents as volunteers is vital to who I am. Volunteers and donors motivate us through their altruistic dedication to ROM's people, collections, exhibitions, and magnificent space. I'm privileged to work with a team of incredibly capable and committed staff who engage, support, and inspire me and others.

I'm originally from Newfoundland and Labrador, where storytelling, culture, and objects are fundamental to the way its people perceive and translate the world. Narratives reveal meaning; they offer context, questions, and connections. Communicating through stories is the most potent way to understand, remember, and reflect.

Another recent experience that affected me profoundly took place in the Willner Madge Gallery, Dawn of Life. I noticed a young family of four. Their 6-year-old boy bounced enthusiastically from touching the world's oldest rock (40 billion years old) to standing awestruck in front of the animated, immersive recreation of the Burgess Shale environment. Eyes wide open, he was bursting with curiosity and wonder.

This is ROM's impact: opening minds and hearts to the magic of exploring our past to understand our present and help guide our future.

Shining a light on matters of global importance and connecting people with the opportunity to transform lives has sparked in me a refreshed way of approaching my career in education and philanthropy.

In this magnificent, iconic space, art, culture, and nature come together creatively and thoughtfully to inform, heal, and inspire—a space where every object has a voice that awakens the discussions we need to have collectively. ROM has a captivating vision as a 21st-century museum, and I am honoured and thrilled to be part of the team giving rise to this important next chapter in the Museum's history.

In ten or twenty years, I'd like to meet that awestruck boy again, to discover the impact his ROM visit had on him. I hope and believe that his experience that day will shape his views on the environment, science, research, and storytelling. For life.

John Kearsey
President & CEO, ROM Governors

EXCITING AMBITIONS

Hatch mobilizes ROM's strategic vision with transformational gift

Hatch, a global engineering, project management, and professional services firm, has made a transformational, comprehensive gift to ROM. This support will help the Museum design exciting new exhibitions, make improvements to its physical campus, boost its digital capabilities, and celebrate Indigenous art and culture by establishing an endowed curatorship to be held by a person of Indigenous heritage.

"We are grateful to Hatch for this generous support, which comes at a critical time as we reshape the museum experience for 21st-century audiences," says Josh Basseches, ROM Director and CEO. "This multi-faceted gift will not only elevate ROM's digital and physical capabilities, it will also establish an important new curatorship, one that will allow us to deepen our connections with Indigenous communities and help shape ROM's ongoing commitment to Indigenous art and culture."

Founded in 1955, Hatch has extensive business and technical experience in metals, energy, and infrastructure sectors. "Our organization is passionately committed to the pursuit of a better world through positive change," says John Bianchini, Chairman and CEO of Hatch, who also serves on the ROM Board of Governors. "We are proud to support the exciting ambitions of ROM to transform lives. This includes establishing and naming ROM's first-ever Indigenous curatorship to help cultivate a culture of inclusion and reconciliation at ROM and in the wider community via the Museum's incredible collections."

As part of Hatch's commitment to contribute to the enhancement of ROM's digital capabilities, for nine weeks, a team of Hatch experts in digitization, organizational change, system implementation, and other core technologies worked at the Museum with a broad cross-section of stakeholders.

"The Hatch team brought an incredible depth of knowledge and experience to lay the groundwork that will transform the Museum's digital future," says Shyam Oberoi, Chief Digital Officer, ROM. "Using a rigorous 'design-thinking' methodology, they helped us discover key insights in the areas of visitor experience, visitor engagement, as well as the physical infrastructure that supports these experiences."

"Our team of global experts enjoyed the opportunity to bring a fresh and independent perspective not only to the digital strategy but also to the development of a holistic and all-inclusive business strategy to improve ROM's business operations," says Alim Somani, Managing Director, Digital Solutions, Hatch.

ROM is proud to celebrate Hatch with the Donor of Merit and Distinguished Corporation awards for philanthropic and in-kind support that includes the Museum's strategic vision, capital projects, Royal Exhibitions Circle, and digital initiatives.

The Hatch Curatorship of Indigenous Art & Culture is also made possible by a matching gift from the Louise Hawley Stone Charitable Trust. A search process is underway for the inaugural holder of the position.

ROM's celebration of the Welcome Project, generously supported by Hatch (L–R): Michael Schatz, Hatch Global Managing Director, Infrastructure; John Bianchini, Hatch Chairman and CEO; Glenn Sakaki, Hatch Global Director, Marketing and Communications

To learn more about supporting these initiatives, please visit rom.on.ca/support.

CURATORSHIP OF ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME

Behind every great museum are great curators—and great donors

ROM curators are at the heart of everything we do—shaping our awesome collections, creating world-class original exhibitions, generating leading research, and inspiring the public. They help make ROM Canada's world museum, and a trusted place of wonder and discovery for millions of visitors each year.

ROM is deeply grateful to the Lazaros (Larry) and Stilianos (Steve) Mirkopoulos families for their generous commitment of $1.5 million to strengthen the Museum's renowned curatorial leadership. Their extraordinary gift will create the Nick Mirkopoulos Curatorship of Ancient Greece and Rome.

This to-be-appointed curator will oversee ROM's collection of more than 7,000 objects from Greece, which represents one of the largest collections of its kind in Canada and is among the top five in North America. The collection explores the story of the development of the Greek world from the Archaic to the Classical and Hellenistic periods, a civilization that ranged from Italy to Afghanistan and from Egypt to the Balkans. The collection is displayed in two permanent galleries in the Museum: the Gallery of the Bronze Age Aegean and the Gallery of Greece. ROM's Roman collection spans more than 1,000 years of history through Republican and Imperial Rome, and encompasses Rome's vast geographic influence throughout that period.

The curatorship is named in honour of Nick Mirkopoulos, who left Greece for Toronto in 1968 and encouraged his brothers to join him in Canada. While supporting members of his family, he built several companies and created a successful cinematic studio business, employing thousands of people in Canada and the United States. This gift will honour his legacy in perpetuity.

Through the generous support of the Mirkopoulos families, we will be able to share the rich and diverse cultural heritage of this superb collection, inspiring the people of Ontario and beyond.

The Nick Mirkopoulos Curatorship of Ancient Greece and Rome has received matching funds from the Louise Hawley Stone Charitable Trust.

Discover how you can make a difference at ROM. Visit rom.on.ca/support today.

ROM CLASSIC GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, September 12, 2022

New location! Play on the gorgeous greens of The Pulpit Club in Caledon, and compete for fabulous prizes and trophies inspired by the Museum's collections. All proceeds support ROM. For details, please contact Janna Bruce at jbruce@rom.on.ca.

rom.on.ca/golf

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ROM VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS

Engaging Museum learners online

Long before the pandemic, ROM was reinventing its distinct model of museum learning to better meet the needs of 21st-century learners, as well as their evolving expectations of the field trip experience. Building on this work, in December 2020, ROM launched the Virtual Field Trip program, which had an extraordinary response, reaching over 150,000 students across Ontario before the end of the school year.

Centred on interdisciplinary topics and led by experienced Museum educators, these sessions activate ROM's teaching collections to cultivate critical thinking skills and promote inquiry from multiple perspectives as students apply their learning to real-world issues. Through two-way video conferencing, teachers and students from kindergarten to grade 8 are able to engage with ROM experts and apply their learning to ROM's collections in real time.

This school year, the program has once again been met with great enthusiasm, having engaged over 90,000 students by the end of March 2022. ROM is deeply grateful to all of our Education Partners for their incredible support that ensures programming is accessible and free to young learners.

For more information, or to learn how you can help support learning across Ontario, please visit rom.on.ca/learn.

Our Education Partners

Ada Slaight and the Slaight Family Foundation

Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts

BARRICK

The Bennett Family Foundation

Martin Connell and Linda Hayes Fund at Toronto Foundation

J.P. Bickell Foundation

KPMG

LINAMAR Power to Perform

Philip and Berthe Morton Foundation

The Rossy Foundation

UBISOFT TORONTO

Weinberg Family Foundation

Our Education Programs are also supported by the Nancy E.A. Main Fund and the Edith Maxine Galbraith Fund.

A LEGACY DECADES IN THE MAKING

On any given day at ROM, you will find collections, exhibitions, and programming that were brought to life by philanthropy. In fact, many aspects of the Museum are possible only because of generous supporters who donate their time, money, or both.

Anne Lindsey is one such supporter. Anne has been a ROM volunteer and donor for more than 30 years, and her dedication and generosity can be seen across the Museum.

Although she has many fond memories of visiting ROM as a child, Anne's connection to the Museum truly began decades later when she became a volunteer. She was involved with ROM Reproductions Shop for 16 years before joining ROMTravel, where she continues to coordinate trips to such destinations as Sicily, Croatia, Tuscany, and Morocco. In 2014, Anne was elected to the ROM Board of Trustees, and served as Chair of the Collections, Engagement & Research Committee.

"One of the best things about volunteering is that it broadened my view and appreciation of ROM, what it does, and what it means for Toronto, for Ontario, and for Canada as a whole," she says.

In addition to being a long-time member of the Royal Patrons Circle (RPC), Anne has generously supported several key initiatives across the Museum—from the 2013 *Mesopotamia* exhibition to the Willner Madge Gallery, Dawn of Life. And while supporting ROM today, Anne is also investing in its future through a thoughtful gift in her estate. "Including ROM in your will is one of the most important—and easiest—commitments anyone can make," she shares. "By making a small investment today, we can help preserve and grow the Museum for future generations."

In honour of her generosity, Anne was invited to the Currelly Legacy Society, a dedicated group of donors who are shaping the future of ROM through planned gifts. Members enjoy exclusive access to curator lectures, private viewings, and behind the scenes tours.

"ROM has been a wonderful part of my life over the last 30 years—and I hope it continues to be a touchstone for me and others for years to come."

ENDOWMENT FUND GIFTS

By establishing a named endowment — either today or in your estate plans— you can honour a loved one or keep your own legacy alive at ROM by supporting its future.

To learn more about leaving a legacy at ROM, contact Janice Correa at janicec@rom.on.ca.

SCOTLAND SLOWLY

Saturday, June 3 to Wednesday, June 14, 2023
Spend 10 days aboard the Ocean Endeavour sailing in comfort from Aberdeen, through the Orkneys and Shetlands then through the Inner and Outer Hebrides, including Islay, Iona, Skye, and Lewis, before ending in Glasgow. Highlights include taking a walking tour of Aberdeen, visiting Fair Isle, once a Viking hub, and seeing island life on Foula, the most remote inhabited island in the U.K. Savour Scotland.

From US$6,395/person

For more information, visit rom.on.ca/romtravel or contact ROMTravel Coordinator Virginia Van Vliet at 416.925.5891 or virginiavanvliet@gmail.com.

ROMWALKS

ROMWalks are back! Join us on guided walking tours of Toronto organized by ROM's Department of Museum Volunteers to provide support for the Museum. Our walking tours celebrate the multiplicity of Toronto's vibrant neighbourhoods and their history, architecture, and arts. Most tours are free and require no registration, while a select few Plus walks require a fee with registration.

Free

WILLOWDALE AND YORK CEMETERY, FARM TO CITY CENTRE
Sunday, June 26, 2022,
2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Discover the transformation of the early farms of the 18th and 19th centuries into the centre of the city of North York prior to the amalgamation of Toronto.

KENSINGTON
Wednesday, July 6, 2022,
6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
Join us as we wander through what was once the old Jewish Market, past late Victorian buildings that have undergone considerable change over the years, and onto the campus of the University of Toronto.

SACRED STONES & STEEPLES
Sunday, July 17, 2022,
2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Explore with us the magnificent sacred buildings from the 19th century, which show the importance of religion in the life of the city and how that has changed over time.

For a full list and details regarding scheduled walks, visit rom.on.ca/romwalks.

ROMWalks for Members

On select days throughout the year, Members have the opportunity to participate in Member-only ROMWalks. These special walks are limited to small groups to ensure your enjoyment, and registration is required. Members will be notified through Member emails when these exclusive walks are open for registration.

For upcoming exclusive Member events and offers, visit rom.on.ca/members/events.

TRUTH AND SOLIDARITY

Pictured here is a Ukrainian man's festive ensemble, on display now in the Samuel Hall ♔ Currelly Gallery. On your next visit to the Museum, stop by and notice the intricate details on the shirt and waistcoat.

Embroidery is a long-standing, iconic Ukrainian art form, and centuries of cultural knowledge and symbolism are woven directly into this clothing. In a time when Ukrainians are experiencing death, destruction, and displacement due to war, this display honours the cultural heritage and identity of all Ukrainians—past, present, and future.

Accessories on loan from the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Ontario Branch
Clothing from the Hutsul region (Carpathian Mountains) of Ukraine
1900s
Linen, cotton, wool, and sheepskin

IMMORTAL OBJECTS. WITHIN REACH.

Your monthly donation helps preserve culture and stories – now and forever.

Our world-renowned collections inspire and connect us all, linking our past with our future. Be a part of their living history today by supporting care and conservation at ROM.

rom.ca/support | 416.586.5530

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$5.95 CAN
Display until September 30, 2022

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